

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) voted today for final passage of a bipartisan bill to provide health care coverage to low-income children across America. President Obama is expected to sign "Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act" (H.R. 2), which extends the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) to 2013 and expands the program to include an additional four million children who would otherwise be uninsured.

"I grew up in a blue-collar home with five brothers and sisters, so I understand the pressures facing working families in today's economy," said Buchanan. "Health insurance can be out of reach to families who struggle to put a roof over their heads and food on the table. I strongly support the SCHIP program as a way to provide health care to low-income kids."

The health care program provides health insurance to more than seven million low-income children nationwide. The bill would protect coverage for children currently enrolled in the program and expand it to cover 11 million low-income children.

"The Children's Health program is a worthwhile investment," added Buchanan. "It gives kids from low-income families access to the care and medicine they need to live healthy lives."

In Florida, there are currently over 218,717 children in Florida's KidCare program, which is funded by federal SCHIP dollars. In Fiscal Year 2008, the federal portion of the state's SCHIP funding was approximately \$286.5million.